

Thinking Ahead

There's so much to think about while you're pregnant. Take a minute to learn about services your newborn will receive. At the hospital, your new baby will be screened (tested) for a variety of factors that may affect his or her health and development. All conditions identified through these screenings can be treated if found early. You will not have to pay for any of these screenings. We want your baby to get the best start possible, and these screenings are the first step.



HEALTH Information Line

If you need more information about any of the newborn screening services or programs described in this guide, call the HEALTH Information Line at **401-222-5960** / **RI Relay 711**, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Our team speaks English and Spanish.



NBS 02-012711

Newborn Screening and Services

What you need to know
before you have your baby.





Newborn Blood Screening

Before you and your baby go home from the hospital, a few drops of blood will be taken from your baby's heel.

This blood is used to screen for several serious conditions.

The results will be reported to your baby's doctor. Newborn

blood screening is required by law. Blood samples are stored until your baby reaches adulthood. To refuse, you must sign a waiver stating that you understand the risk of not having the screening done.

Screening for other conditions not on the enclosed list is available for a fee through other labs. If you would like more information about additional screening tests, talk to a doctor or nurse while you are in the hospital.

Newborn Hearing Screening

Babies learn from the time they are born, and one of the ways they learn is through hearing. Newborn hearing screening can detect possible hearing loss in the first days of your baby's life. During your hospital stay, a small microphone will be put in your baby's ear to measure how the ear responds to soft sounds. The screening takes 10 to 15 minutes and does not hurt. If the results are unclear, the screening may need to be repeated. The Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program will contact you if more screening tests are needed.

First Connections Program

Like you, we want your baby to get off to a good start. While you and your baby are in the hospital, a nurse will review your pregnancy and delivery records. The nurse will look to see if there are any reasons your baby's development could be delayed. Based on this review, the nurse may refer you to the First Connections Program, a home visiting program for families with newborns and young children.

First Connections offers information and help with many of the challenges of bringing your baby home, from breastfeeding support to making your home safe for your baby.



At no cost to the family, the program offers information on topics such as breastfeeding and nutrition, when to call your baby's doctor, and how to make your home safe for your baby. Home visitors provide support and link you to resources and services in your community. While you are in the hospital, a nurse from the First Connections Program may stop in to tell you more about it, or someone may call you after you leave the hospital to schedule a home visit.

KIDSNET

KIDSNET is Rhode Island's information system that helps families and doctors make sure that children receive complete preventive healthcare. All babies born in Rhode Island have health information included in KIDSNET. As your baby grows, your doctor and others will add your child's immunizations, height and weight measurements, nutritional status, medical conditions, and results of the following health screenings: developmental assessment, hearing assessment, newborn blood screening, and lead screening. Information from your baby's birth certificate and from the First Connections, Early Intervention, and WIC Programs is also included.

KIDSNET is used to remind families and doctors when immunizations, lead screenings, and other services are needed. If your child has been to different doctors, KIDSNET will keep track of all of his or her immunizations in one place. KIDSNET also helps to see whether all Rhode Island children are getting the care they need.

KIDSNET information is confidential and is protected under state and federal privacy laws. Only the Rhode Island Department of Health, doctors, nurses, and other approved professionals such as school nurses or the Head Start Program can see KIDSNET information. You have the right to restrict who can see your child's information. For details about how to do this, call the HEALTH Information Line at **401-222-5960 / RI Relay 711**, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

